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## ABSTRACT

Twenty-seven classroom activities to help elementary and secondary students learn about human rights are described. The three major objectives of human rights education and teaching are: (1) to foster the attitudes of tolerance, respect, and solidarity inherent in human rights; (2) to provide knowledge about human rights, in both their national and international dimensions, and the institutions established for their implementation; and (3) to develop the student's awareness of the ways and means by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality at both the national and the international levels. Because research has indicated the importance of the years before adolescence in human rights education, activities have been included for this age group as well as for advanced students. The majority of activities are more suitable for classrooms where teachers are used to engaging in open discussions with their students. However, many of the activities can also be adapted by resourceful teachers for use in more structured situations. The activities are grouped under three areas: basic human rights concepts; organizations and procedures which protect human rights; and specific situations and ways in which human rights are violated. The many and varied activities include the following: students are asked to study The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNESCO, 1948); identify human needs and human rights themes in short stories and novels; and identify themes concerning human rights and oppressions in historical periods. (Author/RM)

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## HUMAN RIGHTS

### Descriptions of Classroom Activities

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To be included as Chapter IV in Graves, N; Dunlop, O. J.; and Torney-Purta, J. (eds.), Teaching for International Understanding, Peace and Human Rights. Paris: Unesco, 1982.

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#### IV HUMAN RIGHTS

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The assurance of human rights and the construction of peace are tasks that go hand in hand....A peace based on inequality, domination, and exploitation, even if it could be maintained by compulsion, would be peace in name only.<sup>1</sup>

That quotation, from UNESCO's Medium Term Plan for 1977-1982 states clearly the compelling reason for including materials for teaching human rights in this source book. UNESCO is unique among the organizations in the UN system because it is entrusted with the task of educating current and future generations to forge a more just world in which human rights are more widely respected. When speaking concretely about human rights education the Medium Term Plan stresses the variety of levels at which the problem of educational change must be addressed -- developing methods which are not limited to transmitting information; creating a more open communication between student and teacher; changing curricula. The problem to be addressed in this handbook is an especially basic one -- what teachers can do in their classrooms to begin human rights education with their pupils.

In 1974, when the Recommendation was being shaped, the decision to include human rights represented an attempt to enhance the concrete content of aims such as international understanding, which otherwise seemed rather vague. By including human rights and fundamental freedoms as essential elements, the Recommendation opened new possibilities and stimulated individuals who had previously been unaware of UNESCO's programme to become interested in education for international understanding.

The International Congress on the Teaching of Human Rights, convened in Vienna in 1978 to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of human rights gave further definition to the topic. Its final Document includes the following guidelines:

Human Rights education and teaching must aim at

- (i) Fostering the attitudes of tolerance, respect and solidarity inherent in human rights;
- (ii) Providing knowledge about human rights, in both their national and international dimensions, and the institutions established for their implementation;
- (iii) Developing the individual's awareness of the ways and means by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality at both the national and the international levels.<sup>2</sup>

UNESCO has implemented this with a Seven-Year Plan for the Development of Human Rights Teaching, which suggests a series of tasks to be accomplished by a variety of organizations in addition to UNESCO, --National Commissions, Member States, Non-Governmental Organizations, Regional Organizations, the United Nations University. In the last decade, many outstanding concrete steps have been taken in teaching to enhance respect for human rights.

#### Human Rights Education in the Member States of UNESCO

In some form human rights are part of the curriculum in all the Member States of UNESCO, with greater or less emphasis placed upon them. Often this topic is included in educational for national citizenship. Moving beyond the national definitions of human rights to consider international human rights is something teachers may approach with uncertainty. Some educators may feel that the subject requires technical competence in law or political science. Familiarity with the UNESCO Recommendation has already begun to change this perception. It is hoped that this chapter will further reduce the legal aura which

surrounds human rights and will suggest concrete ways by which all teachers can incorporate its content and spirit into their teaching.

This chapter was prepared from materials and conceptions common to several Member States of UNESCO (particularly Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Nordic Countries, the UK and the USA). It is hoped that teachers in many areas of the world will be able to adapt these methods to teach about the rights which have been agreed upon in the international community and exemplified in the International Bill of Rights -- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the two Covenants. There are, of course, specific needs in different countries also. The last decades have seen new institutions to deal with human rights in some nations (Provincial Human Rights Commissions in Canada, for example); have found special attention given to human rights policy in others (the United States, for example); and have seen legislative mandates for human rights education in others (Finland and the Federal Republic of Germany, for example). In spite of some diversity, there is also a consensus about human rights expressed in the Universal Declaration which transcends national differences. The idea that a sense of dignity and certain specific rights belong to the individual by virtue of membership in the human species is one which people all over the world feel very strongly about. Neither social class, nor gender nor nationality change the basic desire of individuals for survival and for dignity. the universality of human needs becomes concrete in the universality of the quest for human dignity. This has been recognized in codifications of human rights (including the UN documents) which shape the relations between individuals and their governments and between the governments of different nations.

## The Content of Human Rights Education

"Human rights and fundamental freedoms," declares paragraph 1 (c) of the 1974 Recommendation are "those defined in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights." The Charter is the constitution of the UN; it is also a multilateral treaty to which all the Member States are parties. As a treaty the Charter sets out the rights and obligations of the nations which are members. The preamble and seven of the eleven articles of the UN Charter deal with human rights. Article 55 imposes upon the UN the obligation to promote "universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as race, sex, language or religion." The Member States "pledge themselves" in Article 56, "to take joint and separate action in cooperation with the organization for the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55."

However, just as there are individuals in all countries who fail to live up to their legal obligations, there are also governments which fail to live up to their treaty obligations. The UN human rights provisions are of great importance, however, because the mere existence of legal obligations tends to reduce illegal behaviour of governments as well as individuals. Prior to 1945, when the UN Charter entered into force, the human rights of the citizens of any nation were under international law solely matters of concern within the nation.

The UN Charter was very specific in proclaiming non-discrimination (with regard to race, sex, language or religion), but it did not specify other human rights. The UN General Assembly moved to define those rights by passing unanimously in 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights. Its first article is the most basic -- "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." These include civil and political rights (the right to "life, liberty and security of person"; the prohibition of slavery, of torture and "cruel inhuman or degrading treatment"; the right not to be subjected to arbitrary arrest; the right to a fair trial; the right to own property). It proclaims freedom of speech, religion and assembly as well as the right to freedom of movement. Important among these political rights is the individual's right "to take part in the government of his country, directly or through chosen representatives".

The economic, social and cultural rights proclaimed in the Declaration have their starting point in Article 22:

Everyone, as a member of society...is entitled to realization through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

The Declaration proclaims, for example, that everyone has the right "to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family."

Over the years there has been considerable debate about the legal force of the Universal Declaration. The prevailing view at present is that it is an authoritative definition by the Member States of the United Nations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms referred to by the Charter, which they are under clear legal obligation to promote. Many governments throughout the world have proclaimed that the rights in the Universal Declaration are fundamental and inalienable -- giving it symbolic as well as legal significance. People around the world have increasingly come to believe that governments have a legal obligation to respect the human rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration. Since

the political pressure that domestic and world public opinion generates is often the only way to prevent large scale violations of human rights, it is of great significance that millions of individuals in all parts of the world believe that the Universal Declaration proclaims their rights and that their governments have pledged to respect them.

The Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Covenant on Political and Civil Rights were formally adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966 and entered into force when the required thirty five states ratified them as treaties (in 1976). The Covenants transformed the principles in the Universal Declaration into binding treaty obligations and established an international machinery to supervise and enforce their application. A country which becomes a party to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is under an immediate legal obligation to comply with it. This is not the case with the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which requires the country "to take steps...to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realizations of these rights".

There are other important UN documents too: The Genocide Convention, the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the UNESCO Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. However, the Universal Declaration is at the core of these definitions of rights, and it is that document (at the very least) which every individual should be aware of.

What the UNESCO Recommendation proposes as a standard is more than awareness of the existence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights



and the two Covenants. It is more even than the rote memorization of their provisions. It is rather that respect for human rights be the basis of action of all individuals in the world, whether leaders of governments or ordinary citizens. The review of methods in the remainder of this chapter is intended to contribute to helping pupils and teachers internalize the Universal Declaration rather than seeing it as simply a set of high sounding phrases applying to someone else.

#### Objectives of Human Rights Education:

Within education it is important to articulate the objectives of programs and activities rather than simply to provide the raw material (which in this case is the Universal Declaration). Human rights have been included for several years in lists of global problems put forth by the Political Education Unit (University of York) the World Studies Project (London) and the Institute for World Order (New York) -- to mention only three. Developing a set of objectives which all deal specifically with human rights has been a somewhat more recent endeavor. The Wingspread Conference which included educators from the U.S., the Federal Republic of Germany, Finland and Canada in 1978 phrased the objectives of human rights education as follows:

First, to make students aware of the universal yearning for human rights as part of a sense of human community.

Second, to transmit to students basic knowledge concerning international instruments to protect human rights and their associated institutions.

Third, to give students experience in thinking critically about these issues and their application in particular cases of the denial of human rights.

Fourth, to encourage a concern or empathy for those who have experienced violation of their rights.<sup>3</sup>

Heater provides a somewhat longer list of educational objectives (but one which is substantively similar):

1. Knowledge of the major "signposts" in the historical development

of human rights.

2. Knowledge of the range of contemporary declarations, conventions, and covenants.
3. Knowledge of some major infringements of human rights.
4. Understanding of the distinctions between political/legal and social/economic rights.
5. Understanding of the basic conceptions of human rights (including also discrimination, equality, etc.)
6. Understanding the relationship between individual, group, and national rights.
7. Appreciation of one's own prejudices and the development of tolerance.
8. Appreciation of the rights of others.
9. Sympathy for those who are denied rights.
10. Intellectual skills for collecting and analyzing information
11. Action skills<sup>4</sup>

Either or both of these sets of objectives might guide the development of an entire curriculum in human rights. The presentation of methods and materials which follows will incorporate and elaborate many of them.

#### Pedagogical Principles Guiding Human Rights Education:

Those who are interested in human rights education have both opportunities and challenges facing them. The teacher who becomes attuned to and familiar with these issues may find that by using the concept of human rights it is possible to organize and relate a variety of problems which otherwise seem disparate and lacking in connection. Dinsdale<sup>5</sup> refers to the importance of having teachers "think human rights..." She means that they should become so familiar with the basic documents that the concept becomes an organizing focus. A teacher in a workshop recently phrased it this way, "I've seen how to reorient the whole curriculum around human rights. It's like a camera; all kinds of

things come into focus." She continued to note that hunger is a problem of social and economic rights, while guest workers or refugees illustrate a variety of other rights issues.

Having teachers "think human rights" means making them sensitive to situations in their own classrooms or sections in their own textbooks which are appropriate places to bring up this topic. In a workshop sponsored by the National commission for UNESCO of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Centre for Political Education (Bonn) a group of ten individuals from ten different nations --including representatives of human rights commissions, education ministries, teacher training institutions, and a number of highly skilled classroom teachers -- became so deeply immersed in the Universal Declaration that they were literally generating classroom situations and activities by progressing through the Articles in the Universal Declaration one by one. It was clear to them that the way teachers handled everyday disagreements, interpersonal problems, and divergent ideas were powerful human rights lessons. Because of these links, at several places in this chapter suggestions of specific actions which could be taken by a Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will be highlighted.

Heater<sup>6</sup> also notes some of the challenges in relating everyday classroom events to more profound concerns. He is specific about ways in which the teacher can help young people understand that in expressing certain views they are dealing with fundamental rights issues.

"That's not fair!"  
"He's/she's your favorite"  
"You're always picking on me!"  
"Why can't I stay up late?"  
"Why do I have to visit those relatives?"  
"We want to choose our own team/class captain."

Justice  
Equality  
Discrimination  
Freedom to...  
Freedom from...  
Self determination

Heater also notes a challenge in teaching about rights. It is the young person's tendency to see this issue (as all issues) in a concrete and personalized fashion. Therefore, in the context of human rights teaching, "free" does not mean without payment, and "equal" does not mean numerically balanced.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps more important, it is essential that reciprocity in definitions of rights be appreciated by young people:

Rights are not intended to be interpreted in a selfish sense. There is a difference between freedom and licence, between economic rights and need. Rights carry responsibilities.... Young adolescents especially think in egocentric terms. It would be most unfortunate if an early impression were acquired that rights are what "I" or "my country" must claim and exercise.<sup>8</sup>

Recognition of one's stereotypes and prejudices and the ability to see others' points of view are essential to avoid these pitfalls.

#### Materials and Methods - Introduction:

Suggestions regarding specific materials and methods will be reviewed under three general categories: first, basic ideas about the universality of human rights, specifics concerning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and techniques potentially useful for several different categories of rights; second, the organizations and institutions (both inter-governmental and non-governmental) which deal with the promotion of human rights and their procedures; third, basic problems in the denial of human rights (the relation between individual and state, discrimination, and refugees).

After a brief introduction to each area, specific activities will be described. In each case particular note will be made of what the Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights could do to make the activity of greatest usefulness.

Because research has indicated the importance of the years before adolescence in human rights education, an attempt has been made to



include activities suitable for that level of schooling. See review of research on the developmental importance of this period.<sup>9</sup> In cases where an activity is probably suitable only for advanced students, that will be noted.

The majority of activities are more suitable for classrooms where teachers are used to engaging in open discussions with their students. This follows the Recommendation's stress on an active and participatory approach. Many of the activities could also be adapted by resourceful teachers for use in more structured situations, however.

#### Materials and Methods - Basic Human Rights Concepts:

The most basic concepts connected with human rights, those which undergird all educational efforts and which must be dealt with early in any course of study, include the following:

- First, the universality of yearning for basic rights.
- Second, the unique importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Covenants as expressions of a world wide consensus about human rights.
- Third, the breadth and specific content of the Universal Declaration.

In Activity 1 students are asked to focus on the distinction between humans and non-humans. One way to begin this discussion would be to present a folk tale such as "What is a Human Being" (a Yoruba tale reprinted in Learning for Change in World Society) or a book entitled You Are a Human Being (published by the Council of Europe in several languages). In leading the discussion the Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will encourage the students to think about both needs which are common to animals and humans (food, survival) and those which are different (need to express opinions, need for affection and privacy). After the students recognize these needs, it is important to move to a discussion of the rights which are related -- right to an

adequate standard of living, freedom of association, right to privacy, right to a fair trial. The students can then be introduced to the Universal Declaration where these rights (and others) are enumerated.

Folk tales can also be used to compare concepts of justice and fairness in different societies. (See Law Around the World issue of Update, folk tale entitled The Onion and the Rose) In leading this discussion, the Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will move beyond the comparison of differences between the society pictured in the folk tale and the child's own country to consider the similarities and universalities which also exist.<sup>10</sup>

In Activity 2 students are asked to imagine that a new planet has been discovered which is substantially the same in environment as the area of the world in which they live but which is uninhabited. Pupils are to assume that they are part of a small colony of humans from several different nations on earth who are to colonize this planet. What are the basic needs which would have to be met or recognized by any government there? What basic guarantees of human rights would the colonizers want or need? The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights would then introduce the Universal Declaration (either in full or in an abridged form with the articles grouped into categories). The discussion questions might include the following: What rights appear in the Declaration which the students did not list for the new planet? Is there some reason they were left out? Are there any rights which the students listed which are not in the Declaration? Are they there in another form? Can the students think of ways to insure respect for these rights on a planet-wide basis?<sup>11</sup>

In Activity 3 pupils are asked to consider universalities of culture. An example suitable for young children focusses on lullabies

(see Lullabies Link People by M. Branson). This lesson points out the universality with which parents sing their children to sleep, intending that pupils will understand the biological and psychological needs common to all humans. Pupils hear and sing lullabies from several different cultures (Russian, Japanese, and Flemish/Dutch in this lesson); describe their own experiences in being cared for and caring for others; and finally compose a simple lullabye using what they have identified as lulling words from languages other than their own. With slightly older children one might introduce either the Declaration of the Rights of the Child or the Universal Declaration. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will be sure that the link between needs and rights is made (at a level appropriate to the child's understanding).<sup>12</sup>

In Activity 4 pupils are asked to make groupings of rights to make it easier to understand and remember the content of the Universal Declaration. Otherwise the Declaration may be perceived as a long list of unrelated statements. The book, Your Life, My Life, suggest grouping rights as follows (and provides photographic illustrations of each category): freedom from fear of violence and war; freedom from want; freedom to live and do what one wants (providing it does not deny freedom to others); freedom to express one's ideas; freedom of religion.

It would be possible to use this categorization (or alternatively, one based on civil/political and social/economic/cultural) in several ways. Students might be asked to list Articles under columns headed with these categories and then discuss the Articles which were difficult to classify. Students may be asked to remember situations where they felt especially free to express their ideas; they might also be asked to think of situations they have known or read about where people did not have this freedom. Another possibility is to ask students to search



newspapers for examples of rights protection or violation illustrating each of the categories. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will call students' attention to current events illustrating these rights in the weeks following the completion of this activity of categorization.

A New York State Education Department Project Guide suggests that students make a paper chain of thirty links, writing an Article of the Universal Declaration on each. Every day that a newspaper clipping is brought which illustrates a human rights violation relating to that Article, the article is hung with string or a clip from that link of the chain.<sup>13</sup>

In Activity 5 students are asked to study the provisions of the Universal Declaration and to consider the meaning of actions sanctioned in some cultures in light of these provisions. Kehoe describes two methods which he compared. In the first approach teachers led discussion of cases related to the Universal Declaration to make pupils aware of its provisions and their application to specific cases of cultural practices which might be thought to be contraventions. Students were asked to consider what the consequences would be for society if everyone engaged in the behavior described. In a second approach, the student did not stay in a single discussion group but moved from one area of the room to another. At each "learning station" an Article from the Universal Declaration was written at the top of a large sheet of paper. A large envelope was attached to the paper containing newspaper stories describing contraventions of the Article. Groups of three or four students went from station and discussed the Article, and also wrote their reactions.

Kehoe evaluated the effectiveness of these two approaches (something which few authors do). He noted that the second group scored

higher on a measure of knowledge of international law related to human rights. This work suggests that the Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights has at least one method which has some proven effectiveness.<sup>14</sup>

Activity 6 is more than a single activity. It is the suggestion that over a long period of time life in the classroom be used to provide instances of individuals claiming their rights and instances of conflicts between rights. Some ways to use classroom situations and student comments have already been suggested in the table derived from Heater's work. In real life it is not always possible for every individual to claim his or her rights without running into a conflict of rights with someone else. In fact, a full understanding of human rights means understanding their complexity and reciprocity. Teachers can accustom students to looking at conflicts of rights in their own classrooms. For example, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration ("everyone shall have the right to freedom of opinion and expression") may come into conflict with Article 1 ("the right to be equal in dignity and rights,") when one student speaks rumours about another student. Similarly, a pupil may claim a right to privacy (Article 12)) in not divulging plans of a group to conduct vandalism which violates the rights of the classroom group to "security of person." (Article 3).

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will point to conflicts of rights, label and discuss them as human rights issues, and then generalize discussions to issues outside the school (in community, the nation, or the world). Figure 2 illustrates this progression. Conflict between right to expression and right to dignity might be illustrated by incitements to prejudice appearing on television. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will recognize that these are situations without simple answers. Individuals and governments need to understand basic human

rights principles more fully.<sup>15</sup>

Activity 7 consists of a series of suggestions regarding classroom atmosphere. They are taken from an article by Robin Richardson entitled, Life Cycle of a Course of Study on Human Rights -- for twelve to sixteen year olds. The first phase of this course is to establish a secure, supportive, open and challenging climate in the classroom. The eight tasks related to establishing this climate are quoted here at some length because they may be helpful in conjunction with a number of the Activities listed in this chapter.

1. Establishing and valuing the knowledge and opinions which students already have -- about fairness, law, freedom, other countries, authority.
2. Getting to trust and respect others -- feel confidence that by expressing opinion they will not feel foolish.
3. Getting a sense of initial self confidence through the successful completion of simple tasks -- listing questions which a series of photographs raise, making a poster illustrating part of the Universal Declaration.
4. Adopting a problem-centered and action oriented approach to the subject area by focussing on "problems to be solved or managed" as distinct from "problems which overwhelm us."
5. Taking a measure of responsibility for designing and managing the rest of the course with accountability to each other and the teacher.<sup>16</sup>

In the next phase of the course it is suggested that students use parables, fables, simulations, case studies, and original documents. In the third phase, synthesis and general plans for action are to be worked out and reflected upon. This set of suggestions concerning classroom climate is a tremendous resource for the Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights.

In Activity 8 it is explicitly recognized that the basic nature of human rights may best and uniquely be communicated through various

artistic media.

Using literature adapted to the level of class, the Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights can assign stories or short novels and ask students to identify human needs and human rights themes.

Using works of art students can identify themes concerning human rights and oppression in the historical period in which the artist painted. (see UNESCO Courier article on the paintings of Goya).<sup>17</sup>

Films from different nations can provide powerful and moving illustrations of violations of rights. Sometimes these are shown on television, and teachers can alert students to them and discuss them in class afterwards. The Strasbourg institute of Human Rights is the parent film festival on human rights themes. Such festivals have also been held recently in some U.S. cities. Over a month's period one film theatre showed a variety of productions from different nations. Discussions followed the films, in some cases with the director present.

In Activity 9 it is recognized that any course in social or political history or in civic education has within it many places where the topic of human rights can be considered. For example, the entire course of study for the province of Alberta in Canada for the tenth grade suggests that students consider human rights and raises questions such as the following: Should governments guarantee social order in preference to individual human rights? Among the objectives for skills are the following:

Formulate research questions for case studies of the dilemmas of social control vs. individual freedom in Canadian history.

Analyze values inherent in alternative solutions to historical human rights dilemmas.

Create a plan (with others) to resolve a human rights issue based on a specific value, e.g. equal respect for all persons, individual freedom, social welfare.<sup>18</sup>

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights can bring these perspectives to bear on a variety of topics in the study of history and civic education.

At whatever point in the curriculum a study of the nation's constitution is proposed, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be presented as a framework in which the national constitution can be considered. The portions of the constitutions of other nations which deal with rights can be examined. Students may be asked to meet in small groups and arrive at a definition of human rights based on the material in their own constitution, those of other nations, and the Universal Declaration. It is important that the Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights suggests the study of the Universal Declaration at the time of the first detailed introduction to the national constitution. That is because some research has suggested that the sequencing of this material is important. The constitution which is studied first serves as a basis for organizing students' ideas about other constitutions. It may be of particular interest to students in countries where constitutions were developed and ratified many years ago to also study those of new nations, which were in some cases actually modeled on the Universal Declaration.

In Activity 10 students are given a glossary of words relating to rights -- propaganda, asylum, slavery, culture, opinion, tyranny -- to mention only a few. They are asked to look up these words in a dictionary and to decide whether the meaning there is adequate to understand its meaning in the context of the Universal Declaration or the national constitution of their own or other countries. They are asked in what sense the context in which the word is used or the culture in which it is interpreted may lead to a differing meaning. Students may then be asked to use the definitions and synonyms they have found to

translate portions of the Universal Declaration into language which is simpler and easier for them to understand.<sup>19</sup>

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will use this exercise along with others having a more active approach.

In Activity 11 students are asked to focus on the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. There is a film entitled, What Rights Has a Child?, which illustrates the rights in that Declaration using children from many countries. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will ask students which scenes strike them as memorable; she will ask older students to compare the Declaration of the Rights of the Child to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to suggest why there are differences between them. (See may also want to note the Universal Declaration has greater status in international law.) She might ask pupils to make posters or drawings illustrating these rights or ask when they have been fearful for themselves about some of these rights.<sup>20</sup>

In Activity 12 pupils are asked to generate several solutions to situations, to guard against black and white views of human rights.

(The activity is derived from Peacemaking by B. Stanford):

Check the choice you would make if you were forced to choose between two alternatives. Then try to think of a third alternative that would be more acceptable.

A majority in your country have voted to outlaw your religion. You have tried all kinds of peaceful protests. Would you

\_\_\_\_\_ fight to keep your religion

\_\_\_\_\_ give up your religion to keep the peace

Third alternative: \_\_\_\_\_

You live in a country where starvation occurs frequently. You and your family are nomads, and your government wants you to settle down and become farmers so you will not be in as much danger of starvation. Some people object, however, claiming that the government's policy will destroy your freedom.

Would you

\_\_\_\_\_ choose economic security with some loss of freedom

\_\_\_\_\_ choose freedom of movement with the threat  
of starvation  
Third alternative: \_\_\_\_\_ 21

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will understand the difficulty students have in seeing the point of view of someone who lives differently than they (who has an unpopular religion or who is a nomad). Many will also have difficulty in thinking of alternatives because they perceive every issue as having only one right answer or solution.

In Activity 13 students are asked to project a future in which no more than twenty percent of the world's population would experience any deprivation of needs or rights. A global institution with responsibility for this would have been established and generously supported by the governments of the world. They are to imagine that this Assembly of the Human Community would be operational and successful about one hundred years from now. The students are then to look backwards from the year 2085 to consider how it would be possible to achieve this goal in each of the major areas of human rights. What events, what technological developments, what political changes would be necessary to establish such a success story? What difficulties would have to be overcome? How would establishing nearly universal protection of some human rights influence others? When in the process of looking backwards students reach their own life span (the next 40 years), ask what events they might expect to participate in to set this process in motion. What events might other countries have to undertake? The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will help students focus on possible and preferred scenarios for the future and link their own actions to them. (Exercise adapted from B. Reardon, *Developing a Transition Strategy*).<sup>22</sup>

### Materials and Methods: Organizations and Procedures Which Protect Human Rights:

Closely related to documents, such as the Universal Declaration, which lay out the human rights obligations of governments, are the organizations which work to enhance the realities of protection for individuals. These include international organizations composed of governments (such as the UN and its specialized agencies), regional organizations (such as the Organization of American States) and international non-governmental organizations. Too often these organizations are studied only as structures with details which bore many students, however.

In Activity 14 students are asked to participate in a simulation of a meeting of the UN Commission on Human Rights. This kind of activity can make the procedures for dealing with claims of human rights violations concrete to students. In this simulation (adapted from an outline available from the United Nations Association of the USA) each individual is assigned to play a member of the delegation of a specific country (among the nine suggested in the outline are Costa Rica, Egypt, Nigeria, the U.S., but any set of ten or twelve countries could be used). It is preferable if each country is represented by more than one individual. The sheet passed out to students gives a brief description of the human rights history and policy of the country. This is best supplemented by some study of background material by the students about the country they are to represent. The scene is set as follows:

Recent sessions of the UN Commission on Human Rights have usually been dominated by discussion of specific human rights violations. In this exercise, these issues serve only as background to the fundamental question of the most effective actions for the UN to take in human rights. Two items are on the agenda of the Commission, to which you are a delegate:

Item 1: Should UN development assistance programmes be



conditional on adherence to human rights by recipient nations.

Item 2: Should the procedures of the UN Human Rights Commission be changed to provide for full public disclosure of all reports and deliberations of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies?<sup>23</sup>

The student delegates are instructed to conduct themselves with the decorum expected of those at international meetings by respecting the rights of other governments to state their positions and by substituting negotiation for confrontation whenever possible.

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will be alert to a time when students are well enough informed about human rights to engage in this exercise responsibly and will be certain that they have access to necessary information about the countries they represent so that human rights positions of other nations are not stereotyped.

In Activity 15 students participate in another role playing exercise. This time they are dealing with the filing by individuals of complaints of alleged human rights violations with international organizations (such as UNESCO). The experimental Florida International University Materials include this activity. It has the following objectives: Awareness that UNESCO is one of a number of organizations which has instituted procedures by which individuals can file complaints dealing with what they believe to be violations of their right to an education, right to share in scientific advancement, right to participate freely in cultural life, and right to information (including freedom of opinion and expression). Students are then given the UNESCO complaint procedures, material illustrating these rights, and a description of an alleged violation. They fill out the complaint form (Figure 1) with information such as name; whether one is the victim or someone with knowledge of the situation; the human rights allegedly violated (referring to specific

## Figure 1

Form for Communications Concerning  
Human Rights to be Submitted to Unesco1. Information concerning the author of the communication

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality \_\_\_\_\_ Profession \_\_\_\_\_

Date and place of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Present address: \_\_\_\_\_

Present address: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate in what capacity you are acting:

\_\_\_\_ Victim of violation or violations described below

\_\_\_\_ representative of the victim or victims of the violation described below

\_\_\_\_ person, group of persons or non-governmental organization with reliable  
knowledge of the violation or violations described below2. Information concerning the victim or victims (if author is the victim,  
go directly to part 3)

Name of victim \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

Profession \_\_\_\_\_ Date and place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Present address or whereabouts \_\_\_\_\_

3. Information concerning the alleged factsName of the country considered by the author to be responsible for alleged  
violation \_\_\_\_\_Human rights allegedly violated (refer if possible, to the Universal Declaration  
of Human Rights, the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural  
Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights)\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_Connection between the alleged violation and education, science, culture or  
information: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Facts of the claim \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_4. Information concerning means of redress usedWhat steps have been taken to exhaust domestic remedies (recourse to the courts  
or other public authorities), by whom, and with what results?\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_Has the same matter been submitted to another international authority concerned  
with protection of human rights? If so, when and with what results?

\_\_\_\_\_

Articles of the Universal Declaration or the Covenants); connection between the alleged violation and education, science, culture or information; information about domestic courts consulted, and so on). Students are then assigned to play roles as a person or persons complaining of a violation and members of the Committee (representing a number of UNESCO Member States) whose task is to examine the complaint, determine the issue and the facts, and decide what action should be taken.

After finishing the actual role playing exercise, students are asked to consider questions such as the following:

Why are rights such as these important?

Why might some governments make laws which violated these rights for some or all of their citizens?

In what ways can people complain concerning rights violations in their own countries?

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will use this exercise to increase student empathy for those whose rights are violated as well as teaching students about international organizations which have procedures by which individuals can complain of violations.<sup>24</sup>

Activity 16 helps students become familiar with the fact that in addition to UN agencies, there are also many non-governmental organizations which are active in this field. Students might begin by listing NGO's which they know to be active and inquire about the groups of kinds of violations with which they are especially concerned.

One organization with which students may be familiar is Amnesty International. Amnesty International is an independent organization which works for the release of men and women imprisoned anywhere because of their beliefs, ethnic origin, sex, or religion, provided that they have neither used nor advocated violence. Amnesty advocates early



and fair trials for all political prisoners; it works through prisoner adoption groups in 35 countries to aid individual prisoners (always chosen from countries other than that of the adoption group). Amnesty is not likely to take action in situations such as that illustrated in this cartoon (Figure ). But many of its actions have been very effective in mobilizing public opinion resulting in the freeing of political prisoners. Students' attention might be drawn to questions such as the following: How is Amnesty organized? Why is it their principle that no one can be a member of a group dealing with a political prisoner in their own nation? The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will use the activities of Amnesty and other NGO's to help students generalize about the ways in which non-governmental organizations can make a difference in the way people are treated by governments.<sup>25</sup>

Activity 17 is most suitable for secondary students studying the role of public opinion in forming human rights policy. Students are asked to get together in small groups and make up a set of opinion questions. For example, M. Branson suggests questions like the following:

Our country should allow prisoners of conscience to take refuge in this country.

Our country should not act alone in supporting human rights; it should act only through international organizations like the U.N.

Improving the human rights of people in other countries should be the most important aim of our nation's foreign policy.

The questions are then put into one questionnaire (eliminating duplicates). Each member of the class answers the questions by indicating whether he or she agrees, disagrees, or has no opinion on each statement. The papers are collected; the number of each question is written on the chalk board; and the number of students who have

Figure 2

No, John, I don't think Amnesty  
International will answer your complaint  
that too much homework violates your rights.



chosen each opinion is recorded. Then the class discusses these opinions.

On which questions do the large majority of the class either agree or disagree? How are these questions alike?

On which questions do a large number of the class have no opinion? How are these questions alike?

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will ask students to consider how the opinions of adults on questions like these can influence a country's human rights policy and the actions of other governments. A similar technique could be used for the study of refugees' problems with students asked to construct questions on immigration and refugee policy.<sup>26</sup>

Materials and Methods: Specific Situations and Ways in Which Human Rights are Violated.

One does not wish to focus student attention exclusively upon violations of human rights. However, there are a number of patterns of specific violations of which students should be aware. These relate to the power of the state over the individual, the problem of discrimination (a human rights theme even in the UN Charter), and refugees (individuals who are frequently deprived of many human rights).

There are two important principles in dealing with violations. The first is that students should have a firm understanding of the universality of human rights and organizations which protect human rights before they consider violations in a concentrated way. Of equal importance is the fostering in the student of an ability to look at these problems from several points of view -- to understand that no single individual's perspective can fully represent the situation. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will be careful to avoid stereotyping the problems or the positions.

Problems in the Relation of the Individual to the State: For the purpose of maintaining order, regulating business and controlling criminal behavior, all governments assume some power over their citizens. Violations of human rights frequently result when the state does not exercise this power with legitimacy -- when it takes an authoritarian stand and deprives people of internationally recognized rights. The worst example of this is torture. The right not to be physically abused is one of the most basic detailed in the Universal Declaration. Yet there are still dictatorships which believe that national security will suffer if some individual is allowed to remain free. Many people believe that the right not to be tortured for holding or expressing political beliefs is a right which should never be taken away.

In Activity 18 students will be asked to consider what legitimate power of a government over an individual means.

What does a government base its definition national security upon?

What should happen in the case of a national emergency -- a war with another country or individuals within the society attempting to overthrow the government?

Are there cases where limits ought to be placed upon freedom of expression of opinion?

Students might be asked to relate problems of national security to disarmament and human rights.

How is a government which uses force against its own citizens likely to treat other nations?

How can trust which has been built up between a government and its citizens be generalized to make processes of genuine disarmament more likely?

Clearly this set of questions is much more suitable for advanced than for beginning students and requires some research into alternative ways of defining national security. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights



will be alert to situations reported in the newspapers which would make this topic more concrete.<sup>27</sup>

In Activity 19 students are asked to role play a situation in which a family living in a country which has become a dictatorship wishes to escape to a neighboring country. (See Swedish curriculum guide where this is more fully explained.) Students play the family which is exercising their right to leave their own country, friends who help them, guards, police, and the like. After the exercise students are asked to discuss their feelings as they attempted to empathize with the fleeing family. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will be sure to prepare students for this exercise by having them study the provisions of the Universal Declaration applying in this situation.<sup>28</sup>

In Activity 20 students become familiar with the literature of protest which sometimes results when a government is particularly repressive of individuals rights. An analysis of this literature or contemporary songs can make students sensitive to the existence of repression or discrimination. (See the Florida International University project.) Students are given the lyrics of a song of protest which has become popular very rapidly. The groups which has written and recorded it is described. Students are asked to analyze what the song tells them about the relation between people and government in that nation; what the rock group hopes to accomplish by recording and distributing the song; why the government wishes to ban the playing of the song; how songs have served during history as powerful ways of mobilizing political groups; how they would feel if the government of their country banned a particular group or song. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights may ask each student to compose a protest song or poem and bring it to class for others to discuss (or sing).<sup>29</sup>

In Activity 21 younger children may be encouraged to begin a discussion of abuses of power by considering a situation occurring on the playground -- the class bully. Such an individual contributes to his own sense of power by violating the rights of others. He has seized this power without the consent of those he treats badly; but by doing what he says rather than getting together with others, pupils allow him to continue to exercise this power in an illegitimate way. Pupils may be asked to discuss why individuals become bullies, and then to consider this in the context of wider social groups. (See Your Life, My Life.) They may also consider the legitimate authorities which have power over them. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will move the discussion from the playground and classroom to the local, national, or world situation.<sup>30</sup>

The Problem of Discrimination: There has been an explosion of new materials on discrimination during the past few years. At the heart of the study of various behaviours reflecting discrimination is the student's realization that it can be based on a variety of characteristics. Most common are discrimination against racial, religious or ethnic groups and discrimination against women. As part of this background, students need to understand the distinction between terms like inequality, prejudice, discrimination, oppression. They need to realize that it is a global problem, existing in some form in every country. They should also understand that world opinion is especially strong against discrimination which is written into the laws or becomes the accepted policy of a government. It is difficult enough to abolish discrimination on an individual level by helping people overcome personal prejudice. When discrimination against a racial, ethnic, religious, or language group becomes the law, individuals are constantly

reinforced in their negative feelings.

In Activity 22 pupils are given experiences to help them realize what it would be like to be a member of a group which experiences institutionalized discrimination against itself. These are suitable for younger as well as older pupils. A game can be constructed and played with a board, markers, and cards of different colors which indicate the number of moves a given team is to make. Although students are not aware of this at the beginning, the blue team always wins the game because the blue cards give them longer moves. It would be impossible for the pink, yellow, or green team to win without changing the rules. Unlike most board games, everyone does not have an equal chance of drawing a large move. This game can then be related to a series of exercises in which students consider the concept of fairness and develop their own definitions of it. (See Human Rights in a Global Age). It is important for the Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights to follow this game with a discussion relating ideas of fairness to discrimination in the world --especially Apartheid. Copies of the rules which apply to different groups in societies where discrimination is part of the laws can be given to students. They can then discuss these laws in connection with the definition of fairness and with agreed upon standards, such as the Universal Declaration.

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will be sure that students discuss different ways by which groups become the object of discrimination in the local, national, or world setting.<sup>31</sup>

In Activity 23 students are presented with various sources of data to reinforce the idea that discrimination is a global problem. For example, students can be given a Map Quest concerning facts about discrimination against women. "In this nation 80% of the people who

cannot read or write are women. it is located at such and such a latitude and longitude. What nation is it?"

Reardon suggests that students be given a variety of tables reporting, for example, lengths of criminal sentences for selected types of crimes by race; levels of schooling completed by persons of a given age by race; mean income levels by race. They are then asked to make inferences about the existence of racism from these data.

A very valuable source of data on discrimination is provided by the publications of the Minority Rights Group (with offices in both London and New York). They publish a series of booklets each of which describes a kind of discrimination (against racial, linguistic, or religious groups) in a particular country or countries. Each booklet begins with a quotation from the Universal Declaration, historical background of the particular kind of discrimination, and the legal status of it. Often suggestions are given for films and other readings. These materials are most suitable for older students and may need extensive interpretation. They are regarded by scholars from many parts of the world as a balanced view of discrimination.

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will focus on the global character of human rights without losing sight of discriminatory and prejudiced behavior at home -- against racial groups, migrant workers, those with minority religious beliefs.<sup>32</sup>

Activity 24 is based on two projects on the status and rights of women conducted by students in Associated Schools in India. Representative countries from each major world area were selected and an interdisciplinary study program including themes relating to laws, ownership, jobs, aspirations, and customs regulating the behaviour of men and women was conducted. One group was taught the facts regarding

the status of women and discrimination, while another used its own initiative in gathering the information. Both approaches seemed to lead to a clearer understanding of the status of women in other nations and in their own.

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will try to be certain that both boys and girls participate in projects on women's rights.<sup>33</sup>

In Activity 25 students make a specific study of Apartheid as an example of a very serious form of legalized discrimination. Students are divided into groups representing Black, White, and Coloured. the extent to which Apartheid permeates the everyday activities, the laws, and the attitudes in South Africa is illustrated. Pupils then role play some activities of children of these groups and are asked questions such as the following: How would children who grew up under these conditions develop? What would happen if your country suddenly adopted this set of policies? The UNESCO publication, Children and Apartheid, and the UN publication - Apartheid in Practice, can serve as resources for older students and are essential for the teacher's information. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will ensure that students realize that for those who live under Apartheid it is not a game but a dehumanizing experience.

The Jordanhill materials also consider Apartheid extensively but with somewhat less stress on the legal aspects of discrimination. The graphics used there are excellent sources to begin discussion.<sup>34</sup>

The Problem of Refugees: In some respects this is the most challenging issue to teach. The plight of refugees is accelerating and illustrates many other human rights problems -- failure to provide for the most basic human needs, use of power by governments

over individuals, discrimination (since many refugees are of minority status). Pupils need to be helped to see refugees as more than statistics and to develop as much empathy as possible. They should also be encouraged to look at the policies of their own government with respect to the treatment of those who seek refuge within their own country. It is important that they reflect both on how they would feel if they were refugees and on how they would feel if programmes provided for refugees removed certain benefits from them. For example, what would their feelings be if their school activities or sports were cut to provide funds for language instruction for refugees? The Jordanhill materials also include an activity where students are asked to consider whether an immigrant to Scotland should have the right to vote and then to consider the rights they or their family would want if they were immigrants to another country.

In Activity 26 pupils are asked to reflect on the reasons that people flee their countries. The process of empathy building may be enhanced by asking students to imagine what it would be like to have to leave one's home and belongings and to be separated from family members. Your Life, My Life suggests that students write a descriptions of these these feelings, make a poster regarding refugees problems, clip articles from recent newspapers describing the plight of refugees.

What differences might one observe between those fleeing political repression, natural disasters, inadequate provisions for economic needs, or discrimination?

What rights in the Universal Declaration apply particularly to to the problems of refugees (the right to leave one's country; the right to an adequate standard of living)?

Which rights are most likely to be denied to refugees while they are fleeing?

What does it mean to have the right to a name and nationality?

What does the right to receive asylum or the right to leave and return to one's country mean?

Whose responsibility is it to help refugees?

What groups help refugees in one's own community or nation?

What organizations serve refugees internationally?

An important further resource is a book published by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees entitled the Refugee Child. The pictures and descriptions of UN programs for refugees there can serve as a stimulus for further discussions. A very moving set of refugee childrens' pictures and comments about their lives is to be found in Kampuchean Chronicles (published by National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan). Figure gives some excerpts of the sort which might be used to begin discussions. The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights will stress the theme of the song -- "there but for fortune, go you or I" -- to try to keep students from distancing themselves too much from these enormous problems.<sup>35</sup>

In Activity 27 students focus on social, economic and cultural rights of refugees. In some nations this may be easiest to do by actual field work projects dealing directly with refugee problems. The model for a program such as this might be one which took place in a UNESCO Associated School in India. Students went to a village in a rural area, set up a camp, and studied life in the village. They drew up a list of suggestions of ways in which they, adult groups, and various government departments might help in combating problems such as adult illiteracy and aid in the enrollment of children who had never previously attended school. In other nations where field work is not possible, simulated experiences of the deprivation of economic and social rights may be used -- for example, the building of a mock refugee village such as that

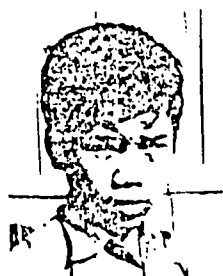
Figure 8

## Kampuchean Children and Their Reflections



Van Rien  
12 years

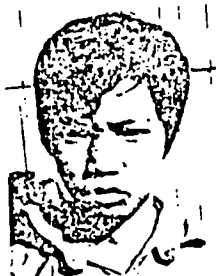
I can't recall any happy moment during the past five years. I really can't.  
What do I think about my future?  
I think nothing about my future.



Nam Mao Ro  
12 years

I want to be an artist. Or perhaps a mechanic, an auto mechanic. Or may be I'll become a fisherman. I like to catch fish too.

One day, when no one was watching, I caught some fish and brought it home. We ate it quickly so no one would notice. The soldiers never found out. That's the happiest memory I can recall.



Yos Vun  
13 years

We dug canals. We carried baskets loaded with mud and stones. We chopped wood. No, we did not play or sing. That was not allowed.



Yin Sina  
12 years

I want to learn English. That will help me to make friends with foreigners. I like them because they help me. They also make me laugh. But sometimes they make me cry too. They say they will come back to meet me but they never do.



Ngoc  
13 years

I wasn't there when it happened. My father had gone to look for wild vegetables for us to eat. It began to rain. Lightning struck him and he died. Now, whenever it rains, I think of him. Rain makes me cry.



described by Allahwerdi.<sup>36</sup>

The Teacher Sensitive to Human Rights may wish to use certain of the activities suggested for the study of discrimination or refugees to apply to other human rights problems.

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